

Whereas Demetrius Darnell Homer—

(1) in August 2011 was sentenced to 20 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor for violently forcing a 14-year-old Atlanta girl into prostitution, controlling her through beatings, threatening her with a knife, shocking her with a taser in front of another underage girl whom he had placed in prostitution, and forcing her to engage in prostitution while she was pregnant with his child; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Leighton Martin Curtis—

(1) in February 2012 was sentenced to 30 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor and production of child pornography for pimping a 15-year-old girl throughout Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina to approximately 20 to 35 customers each week for more than a year; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Ronnie Leon Tramble—

(1) in March 2012 was sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking through force, fraud, and coercion for forcing more than 5 young women and minors into prostitution over a period of at least 5 years throughout the State of Washington, during which time period he constantly subjected the victims to brutal physical and emotional abuse; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas, according to AIM Group, 80 percent of online prostitution advertising revenue for the month of February 2012 was attributed to Backpage.com;

Whereas, according to AIM Group, the number of Backpage.com advertisements for “escorts” and “body rubs”, a thinly veiled code for prostitution, increased by nearly 5 percent between February 2011 and February 2012;

Whereas, according to AIM Group, Backpage.com earned an estimated \$26,000,000 from prostitution advertisements between February 2011 and February 2012;

Whereas Backpage.com vice president Carl Ferrer acknowledged to the National Association of Attorneys General that the company identifies more than 400 “adult entertainment” posts that may involve minors each month;

Whereas the actual number of “adult entertainment” posts on Backpage.com each month that involve minors may be far greater than 400;

Whereas, according to the National Association of Attorneys General, Missouri investigators found that the review procedures of Backpage.com are ineffective in policing illegal activity;

Whereas, in September 2010, Craigslist.com removed the “adult services” section of its website following calls for removal from law enforcement and advocacy organizations;

Whereas, by September 16, 2011, 51 attorneys general of States and territories of the United States had called on Backpage.com to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of its website;

Whereas, on September 16, 2011, the Tri-City Herald of the State of Washington published an editorial entitled “Attorneys general target sexual exploitation of kids”, writing, “. . . we’d also encourage the owners of Backpage.com to give the attorneys general what they are asking for”;

Whereas, on October 25, 2011, 36 clergy members from across the United States published an open letter to Village Voice Media in the New York Times, calling on the company to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on December 2, 2011, 55 anti-trafficking organizations called on Village Voice

Media to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on December 29, 2011, the Seattle Times published an editorial entitled “Murders strengthen case against Backpage.com”, writing, “Backpage.com cannot continue to dismiss the women and children exploited through the website, nor the 3 women in Detroit who are dead possibly because they were trafficked on the site. Revenue from the exploitation and physical harm of women and minors is despicable. Village Voice Media, which owns Backpage.com, must shut this site down. Until then, all the pressure that can be brought to bear must continue.”;

Whereas, on March 18, 2012, Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times wrote in an opinion piece entitled “Where Pimps Peddle Their Goods” that “[t]here are no simple solutions to end sex trafficking, but it would help to have public pressure on Village Voice Media to stop carrying prostitution advertising.”;

Whereas, on March 29, 2012, Change.org delivered a petition signed by more than 240,000 individuals to Village Voice Media, calling on the company to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on January 12, 2012, John Buffalo Mailer, son of Village Voice co-founder Norman Mailer, joined the Change.org petition to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com, stating, “For the sake of the Village Voice brand and for the sake of the legacy of a great publication, take down the adult section of Backpage.com, before the Village Voice must answer for yet another child who is abused and exploited because you did not do enough to prevent it.”;

Whereas, on March 30, 2012, a private equity firm owned by Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. completed a deal to sell its 16 percent ownership stake in Village Voice Media back to management;

Whereas, in *M.A. ex rel. P.K. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC* (809 F. Supp. 2d 1041 (E.D. Mo. 2011)), the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri held that section 230 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 230) (as added by section 509 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-104; 110 Stat. 137)) protects Backpage.com from civil liability for the “horrific victimization” the teenage plaintiff suffered at the hands of the criminal who posted on the website to perpetrate her vicious crimes; and

Whereas the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-104; 110 Stat. 56) and the amendments made by that Act do not preclude a service provider from voluntarily removing a portion of a website known to facilitate the sexual exploitation of minors in order to protect children in the United States; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the efforts of law enforcement agencies to provide training to law enforcement agents on how to identify victims of sex trafficking, investigate cases of sex trafficking, prosecute sex trafficking offenses, and rescue victims of sex trafficking;

(2) supports services for trafficking victims provided by the Federal Government, State and local governments, and non-profit and faith-based organizations, including medical, legal, mental health, housing, and other social services; and

(3) calls on Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC to act as a responsible global citizen and immediately eliminate the “adult entertainment” section of the classified advertising website Backpage.com to terminate the website’s rampant facilitation of online sex trafficking.

## AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2085. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2086. Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BENNET, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. VITTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2087. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2088. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2089. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2090. Mr. CRAPO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

## TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 2085.** Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1925, to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

### SEC. . IDENTIFYING UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE PROGRAMS.—Each fiscal year, for purposes of the report required by subsection (c), the Attorney General shall—

(1) identify and describe every program administered by the Department of Justice;

(2) for each such program—

(A) determine the total administrative expenses of the program;

(B) determine the expenditures for services for the program;

(C) estimate the number of clients served by the program and beneficiaries who received assistance under the program (if applicable); and

(D) estimate—

(i) the number of full-time employees who administer the program; and

(ii) the number of full-time equivalents (whose salary is paid in part or full by the Federal Government through a grant or contract, a subaward of a grant or contract, a cooperative agreement, or another form of financial award or assistance) who assist in administering the program; and

(3) identify programs within the Federal Government (whether inside or outside the agency) with duplicative or overlapping missions, services, and allowable uses of funds.

(b) RELATIONSHIP TO CATALOG OF DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE.—With respect to the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2)(B) of subsection (a), the Attorney General may use the same information provided in the catalog of domestic and international assistance programs in the case of any program that is a domestic or international assistance program.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than February 1 of each fiscal year, the Attorney General shall publish on the official public website of the agency a report containing the following:

(1) The information required under subsection (a) with respect to the preceding fiscal year.